

A Few Notes on my 1 Kings Commentaries

I have purchased a handful of commentaries to help in my studies of 1 Kings. If I had to start over, there are some commentaries I would buy again, and some I would not.

Commentaries I would buy again:

House, Paul R., *1, 2 Kings*, The New American Commentary, electronic ed., 2001.

For the most part House focuses on the details, helping me to understand the text, though he doesn't spend much time in the Hebrew. He does have periodic overview sections to help me to see the big picture, but he doesn't normally look for the central truth of the text or Christ in the text. Still, I appreciate his conservative approach and his help with the details. I would definitely buy this commentary again.

Davis, Dale Ralph, *1 Kings*, Focus on the Bible, 2002.

Davis is definitely a conservative author, often defending the Bible and its characters when others are attacking. The style is very pastoral, and Davis is often looking for the central truth of the text (though I'm not sure he always finds it). As expected in a pastoral commentary, Davis is short on studying the Hebrew or exploring down in the weeds, but he does provide several illustrations. I would definitely buy this commentary again.

Commentaries I would not buy again:

DeVries, Simon J, *1 Kings*, Word Biblical Commentary, 2nd ed., 2003.

This commentary can be summed up in two words: redaction criticism. DeVries is consumed with finding the various authors behind the text, trying to determine who wrote what pieces and which are actually biblical. DeVries is not an inerrantist, spends very little time with the text as a whole, and not much with the Hebrew (which surprising for a volume in this series). I quickly tired of this commentary and stopped using it a few weeks into my study. I would not buy this commentary again, nor anything else by DeVries.

Provan, Iain W., *1 and 2 Kings*, The New International Biblical Commentary, 1995.

Provan is a skeptic. He doubts so much about the Bible and its characters and is constantly attacking them; certainly he is not an inerrantist either. Despite this prevailing attitude, Provan is spot on from time to time, discerning clearly some part of the text. There's not a lot of detail in this text, very little working with the Hebrew, no looking for the central truth, and no application. If I had several other good commentaries, I would not buy this one again; but if I was short on choices, I might.